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Editorials

Continued Russian Challenge Incentive For U.S. Economy

Some comments made recently by Gen. C. P. Cabell, deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency, drive home the need for a more realistic attitude toward Communist Russia on the part of Americans generally.

In the first place, Gen. Cabell made it clear that there is no revolution smoldering under the surface in Russia which may at almost any time explode in the overthrow of the Communist dictatorship. There may be changes in the controlling clique of the dictatorship but there is every reason to believe that the objectives will remain the same.

Ever since the Communists came to power in Russia 43 years ago, there have been predictions of the imminent collapse of the Russian government. It seems to us that in view of the lack of evidence that any such breakdown is in the making, we can dismiss the predictions as wishful thinking. And the most dangerous thing in the world is to try to convince yourself that something will happen just because you want it to happen.

Gen. Cabell particularly discounted the idea that a demand for more consumer goods will force the Soviet government to change its military and economic plan-

ning. The Russians may want the consumer goods but it has become quite obvious that they are willing to wait for them while the dictatorship builds up national power. In other words, the Russians are sold on a dream of national destiny and it is amazing how a people who think they have a special mission will go without luxuries or even ordinary necessities.

The point which Gen. Cabell brought out and which we must remember is that we must face a double threat of military and economic aggression by the Russians for a long time to come. This means that we must maintain our own military power and we must also adjust our economy on a competitive basis.

Competition has a sharpening effect when it is recognized as such. By this time, it seems that all Americans should understand that the Russian challenge must be faced and that we cannot expect it to disappear in the foreseeable future. That does not imply that this country should be transformed into an armed camp. It does, however, impose on us the duty of being continually on the alert to protect our own interests in the world and to advance them wherever the opportunity presents itself.